

(1883)

An Adolescent Crisis.

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Another year opened and again with unflagging courage, hope, and enthusiasm we planted a crop. For me this year was to be fuller of life and beauty and experience than any that had gone before. In early spring I reached a turning point or crisis in my development. My realization of strength and manhood, the spirit of selfreliance resulting from four years of steady work on the farm, with the responsibility of managing the farm during father's absence, my desire for independence and my dreams of what I could do if I were working for myself, my growing dissatisfaction with the hard work without reward, privations due to poverty caused by crop failure, the lack of opportunity for education and recreation, all tended to make me fractious at times and at other times so despondent that I seriously thought I would prefer to be dead than alive, or a prisoner in jail where I could at least have leisure to read, and I soberly considered the different ways of committing suicide. When in one of these moods a little incident in our daily lives led to an outbreak.

It was part of the daily chores for me to milk four or five cows. This work was intensely disagreeable to me. The calves were confined in the cowlot. The cows grazed on the open prairie and came to the gate night and morning. In wet weather the lot was trodden into a sea of oozy mud; in dry weather it was covered with a deep layer of dust and manure, and in summer there were swarms of flies buzzing about. The custom was to let one cow in at a time and drop a quart of cotton seed or some corn nubbins on the ground to keep her quiet. The calf was permitted to suck just enough to start the flow of milk, and then with a rope about its neck was pulled off and tied to the fence. This was easy enough while the calf was small, but when it became half grown

and bumptious it sometimes involved an exhausting trial of strength. Then with an open bucket between my knees I would squat on the ground and proceed to draw the milk, an operation that soon made my hands ache. Then if the cow put her dirty foot into the bucket of milk, or kicked it over, or wiped her tail--sometimes covered with mud or fresh manure--across my face in her efforts to switch off a fly that was boring into her flank, it did not tend to sooth my ruffled and rebellious feelings. I did not like milk or butter anyhow and thoroughly disliked the drudgery of churning. Furthermore, I hated the whole operation of milking and somehow felt that it was women's work and degrading for men. My sister knew this and at that stage of her development delighted in teasing me about it. ~~PP~~ One morning before breakfast when I was in a particularly ugly mood she came into the cowlot with a clean dress on, smiling and happy. Seeing the sulky look on my face, she drew near and crooking her finger at me and grinning maliciously said "Yah, yah, yah, ~~milkmanx~~ milkmaid, milkmaid." I was speechless with anger. I happened to be milking a large black and white cow with an unusually free flow of milk. On the spur of the moment I directed a heavy stream of milk at my sister. It struck her squarely in the face and ran down her clean dress in front. She screamed and ran to father, who had just finished feeding the team, crying out between sobs "See what Lee did, see what Lee did." Father, who was quick tempered and impulsive, saw the condition of her dress and, without asking for an explanation from me, called me to him, held me by the collar and with a halter strap struck me many times across my thin shirt and bare legs until he began to realize that perhaps something was wrong because I neither resisted nor

cried out. I was simply speechless with rage and a sense of injustice and an instantaneous determination that I would never again submit to be punished but would run away at the first opportunity. We walked in awkward silence to the house where breakfast was waiting for us. The fact that I sat with downcast eyes at the table without eating or speaking evidently disturbed both father and mother greatly and they respected my silence. Sister Nellie appeared to be frightened. After breakfast father remarked that he would plow in the lower field and I could plow the corn near the house, which was coming through the ground. Shortly afterwards, when the dishes were washed and the kitchen put in order, mother and sister went to the lower field to help father. I was glad that circumstances seemed to favor my design so quickly. I kept my eyes on the family in the lower field. When their faces were turned away from the house I drove out to the end of the row, unhitched the horse and put him in the stable with an armfull of hay. Then walking quickly to the house I got a clean handkerchief, cut off half a loaf of bread I found in the cupboard and wrapped it in a piece of paper, slipped out the front door, crossed the garden and entered a small ravine between our place and that of Parson Hall. By stooping down I kept out of sight until I passed behind some small trees and bushes. Concealed in this way I passed within a few hundred yards of where the family was working without being seen.

I followed the ravine to its juncture with Sander's Creek which I followed upstream until I came out on the prairie two or three miles above our place. Then I struck across the open prairie in a southwesterly direction and walked rapidly until

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shortly after noon, as I could tell by the position of the sun.

By this time I had walked off some of my wrath and a cloud of tormenting black ~~clouds~~ clouds were dissipated. At first I had felt elated that I had made my escape and was free, free with life and all the world before me. Now I felt a little tired. I stopped at a small persimmon grove near which was a shallow water hole. I sat down with my back to a tree and ate part of the bread and drank some water from the hole. Hunger and thirst satisfied, I began to rest and take stock of the situation. In the distance I could see a few farm houses and a lane through which ran the county road between Paris and Honey Grove. I knew that Honey Grove was about seven miles farther on. I felt confident that I could find employment at one of the farms as an extra hand for planting, hoeing and plowing. I had thought of going to the Reynolds farm where I knew that I would be ^{welcome} ~~taken in~~, but I ^{also} ~~knew~~ that would be one of the first places at which father would inquire, so I had deliberately avoided going in that direction.

P I began to wonder what father and mother were doing, how they would feel when they returned to the house at noon and found me gone. They would know that I had gone because the plow was at the end of the row and the horse in the stable, and they would know why I had run away. Then there passed in review before my eyes their struggles to make a living; how they had left nothing undone to make a crop with which to pay off the mortgage and become independent with a home of their own; the disappointment and ⁱ ~~prov~~ation that had resulted from adverse weather conditions and crop failures; how father had gone to work in the ^{shop} in Paris to earn money with which to buy food and clothing for the family and pay interest on the mortgage; how mother not only had

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done all the house work, made all our clothes, and worked like a man in the fields, but had valiantly tried to earn a little money teaching school; and I thought of how I had been a partner in their hopes, work, responsibilities, and disappointments. What would they do without my help? Clearly they would have to give up the farm. For the first time I tried to see things from their point of view and I saw clearly that they had not done better by me in the way of clothing and schooling because they were powerless. I knew that father had acted hastily and would regret profoundly having beaten me. I had no resentment against my sister, because I had squared the account with her and felt that her penalty for teasing and provoking me was both instantaneous and adequate. Mother, I knew would be greatly distressed and disconsolate and would never forgive father.

Then I began to reason about the effect of my separation from the family in this manner on my future life. Never for a moment did it occur to me that I could not make my own way and prosper and accomplish many things, or that freedom to make my own way and live my own life was less desirable than I had dreamed. But what was happiness anyway? It must be content, self-satisfaction, and tranquility of mind. Could anyone be happy and tranquil if he had done anything that he regretted? Would the time ever come when I should regret having left my father and mother before I had served out my time until I was 21 as the law required? Wouldn't I always feel that I had ^{deserted and} cheated them? I did not feel that I owed them anything for my bringing up, because that was involuntary on my part and they alone were responsible; but under the law I owed them seven years more of

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service, and if I left without rendering that service it would be the same as stealing and breaking the law. Surely I would regret it, not once but throughout the rest of my life. I realized that the past is something done and gone, something that can never be changed, and the thought that all my life I might be tormented by regret and have no power to overcome it seemed rather serious. Whittier's lines, "The saddest of all words of tongue or pen, Are these, It might have been," kept running through my head. ^{here I am} Then I thought, ~~whyxxxxixout~~ on the prairie, all alone, free to go ahead and realize some of my dreams, but with the possibility of being saddled with regrets as long as I live, yet still free to go back, take up the burden, serve my time, and then the rest of my life be truly free and independent without regret for the past. "Yes," I said to myself, "I am free for the first time to make my life whatever I want it to be. I want it to be a happy life, but I cannot be happy if I have regrets. Surely my chances for success and happiness will be greatest if I am free from regrets. And how can one so live that he can never have anything to regret?" And the answer that formed itself in my mind then and there and has been with me ever since was "to so decide and act in every moment and situation, and in the light of knowledge at that particular time and place, that ever after I would think that in the same situation, time and place, and with the knowledge then available, I would decide and act precisely the same." Not a ^{ad} working rule to be formulated by a barefoot country runaway boy shortly after his fourteenth birthday. Now that I am in my 60's and after a busy and somewhat eventful life, I can think of no better rule. At this stage my only regret is

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that our knowledge at any given time is incomplete and that we are so bound by custom, tradition, and conventions, especially intolerant puritanical traditions and conventions, that only late in life, when it is too late, we realize that ^{much of} puritanical sin is really not sin at all and that some of our best impulses and sometimes the best of which we were capable was repressed and lost. So that now that I am no longer young I regret not the sins I have committed so much as those I might have committed had I been wiser and braver.

As the result of my concentrated reasoning I immediately got up and started to walk the weary miles back. It was after dark when I reached home. Mother threw her arms about my neck and wept. Father returned from a round among the neighboring farms where he had been to inquire if I had been seen. When he saw me he reached out his hand and said huskily, "Been rustivating a little, have you, Lee?" "Yes," I said, "but it must not happen again." Mother fixed me up something to eat and then I went to bed completely tired out. So ended this crisis.

Private Study.

7 The next morning I resumed my daily routine of work, but mentally I was different. The idea of making as much as possible out of my one life, the life that was my own and that I could definitely shape to my own ends, and that it should be so lived that I should never have anything to regret, took possession of me. Also I realized that if I was to serve seven years longer on a poor farm without compensation or opportunity for schooling, my only hope of getting an education would be through private study. I figured that if I studied only one hour a day on week days and several hours on Sundays the total at the end of a year would be considerable and that it was worth trying. Having

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reached this conclusion I got out my small collection of elementary textbooks and that very day started a course of systematic study, getting a lesson in each book per day, and then trying to repeat them to myself while plowing or hoeing alone in the fields. It was thus I formed the habit of daily studying or reading that has continued through life and that has gone beyond the bounds of any university course in the world.

7

Fourth Drouth year.

Again for the fourth consecutive year we planted in hope and enthusiasm, the mortgage for the purchase price of the farm not having been reduced and owing relatives for money borrowed with which to pay for feed and seed. Again we went through the rush of preparation and planting, of hoeing and cultivating, waging the almost hopeless struggle against crabgrass that sprouted and grew almost overnight while we slept, until lay-by time. Day after day I did my daily tasks, saw magnificent sunrises and sunsets, watched the seried ranks of ^{fluffy} ~~floating~~ white clouds floating across the blue sky by day and across the moon and stars by night, listening to the cheerful notes of the meadowlarks, finches, and catbirds, and the exquisite melody of the mocking birds, the drumming of the prairie chickens in the early morn, the cries and hoots of the owls and the querulous calls of the whippoorwills at night, the ^yriad voices of insects and of rustling leaves, scented the smell of burning brush and prairies in early spring, or newly turned sod, of blossoming trees, of new mown hay, and of fruits and flowers in their season, and heard the music and harmonies of the sweeping winds and storms of the seasons, watching in summer the showers and rains fall upon the thirsty growing crops, and in time of drouth watching

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the chance rain cloud discharge its slanting rods of rain toward the earth, draw near and nearer to our farm, and just before reaching it and giving us needed relief slowly veer off to one side and pass us by. Jack Rabbits.

7

Before spring opened Mr. Garner came out for a few days hunting. He wanted a jack rabbit and brought with him a town dog. Father had purchased a second-hand small spring wagon with one seat in front and an ~~an~~ open space behind. We drove out on the open prairie to the south, father and Mr. Garner occupying the front seat. I sat on a cracker box in the rear with my gun across my lap. ~~The~~ We started the team at a trot, but gradually it slowed down to a walk. After proceeding a short while at a slow pace father clucked to the team and flicked them with his whip. They sprang forward with a jerk that upset the cracker box on which I was sitting and I turned a back summersault landing sitting up on the soft ground and grass. Neither father nor Mr. Garner heard me and I had to shout to them. When they stopped they were astonished to see me running after them. ~~PP~~ We soon started a jack rabbit. They are peculiar looking creatures, nearly as large as a small goat. When not pressed they lope off leisurely on three legs with their long ears standing upright. The town dog took after the rabbit with great ^{eagerness} ~~gusto~~ and the nearer he got to it the faster he ran and the more excited he became. When within a few yards of his prey the hare put down its fourth leg and left the dog so quickly and so far behind that he stopped, gave a bewildered look in the direction of the disappearing hare and returned to us with his tail between his legs and a look of shame on his face that was so comical we all laughed at him.

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7 This spring I began to ride Daisy, Gypsy's colt that father had given me three years before. She was shapely but small, a great pet, and not very intelligent. Up to this time she had lived on the prairie, but I had accustomed her to letting me approach and pet her. When she became accustomed to bridle and saddle and to me I mounted her without any protest and she soon became bridle-wise. The first time I staked her out on the meadow, i.e., tied one ^{end} of a rope about her neck with a knot that could not slip and the other to a stake driven in the ground, she tried to shake the rope off and then bucked, pitched, kicked and jumped, and finally took the rope in her teeth and stood upon her hind legs and waltzed around with it until she was tired. Unfortunately, the first time I tied her with a halter it was to a post that had rotted at the ground. She backed away and when she ~~threw~~ ^{felt} the pull of the halter behind her ears she threw her whole weight backwards with sufficient force to pull the post out of the ground. The second time I tied her with a halter to a tree. She immediately threw her weight backward and broke the halter. Ever afterwards I had trouble with her. I had to use a halter made of strong rope and always tie her to a tree or very strong post. She never failed to try to break loose and several times she threw herself and would have strangled if I or someone else had not come to the rescue and cut the rope.

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or beds as ridges on either side. The old mare just fitted in between these ridges and could not get up and after struggling for awhile gave up trying. Father and I dug away one of the ridges. While doing this the mare laid perfectly quiet and contented as if she knew what we were doing and her responsibility was ended. Then, one at her head and the other at her tail, we assisted her to a standing position. Many times thereafter she seemed to seek similar places in which to roll and with the same results. On such occasions father in very profane language rold old Jennie what he thought of her, and if the mare did not understand him at least she rolled her eyes in apparent surprise, and at times she looked as if she were grinning at him.

Horseback Excursions.

Other boys in the neighborhood had acquired ponies. Ilas Hall had a little poney very like Daisy, but she was a vicious little brute. Thom Connolly had a long legged bay mare with lots of daylight under her. Sunday afternoons we usually got together and rode about the prairie, or along the creek, occasionally having a contest in horse racing or jumping, chasing jack rabbits, or visiting Maxey, or Tigertown, or farm houses.

Once we rode ten miles to visit an acquaintance of Tom's who had some summer peaches and we wanted a "bait." We found an Irish family living in a one room shanty. We were not especially welcome, but nevertheless the wife fixed up a luncheon of corn pone and coffee. They had about a dozen peach trees in a small lot overgrown with weeds. The peaches were not very good but we ate as many as we could. It was a hot day and we decided not to return until late in the afternoon when it might be cooler. On the floor in one corner I found the remains of a book, without cover or title page and the first half missing. I became

or beds as ridges on either side. The old mare just lifted in between these ridges and could not get up and after struggling for awhile gave up trying. Father and I dug away one of the ridges. While doing this the mare laid perfectly quiet and contented as if she knew what we were doing and her responsibility was ended. Then, one at her head and the other at her tail, we assisted her to a standing position. Many times thereafter she seemed to seek similar places in which to roll and with the same results. On such occasions father in very profane language told old Jennie what he thought of her, and if the mare did not understand him at least she rolled her eyes in apparent surprise, and at times she looked as if she were grinning at him.

Other boys in the neighborhood had acquired ponies. Thomas Connolly had a little pony very like Daisy, but she was a vicious little brute. Tom Connolly had a long legged bay mare with lots of daylight under her. Sunday afternoons we usually got together and rode about the prairie, or along the creek, occasionally having a contest in horse racing or jumping, chasing jack rabbits, or visiting Mexey, or Tiger town, or farm houses. Once we rode ten miles to visit an acquaintance of Tom's who had some summer peaches and we wanted a "bait." We found an Irish family living in a one room shanty. We were not especially welcome, but nevertheless the wife fixed up a luncheon of corn pone and coffee. They had about a dozen peach trees in a small lot overgrown with weeds. The peaches were not very good but we ate as many as we could. It was a hot day and we decided not to return until late in the afternoon when it might be cooler. On the floor in one corner I found the remains of a book, without cover or title page and the first half missing. I became

interested. It was about a family with father and mother, two grown daughters, one of which had been deceived and abandoned, and two or more sons, one of which was thrown into prison. Many years later in reading a copy of Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield," I came upon chapters that I recognized as having read in the torn book I found in the Irish shanty.

Another Sunday horseback excursion was to a small farm several miles lower down on Sander's Creek. As we left our lane Jenny's colt, Duke, now a fine shapely animal in his third year and running loose on the prairie, joined us and refused to be driven away. When our horses galloped he galloped with them. We reached the farm just before the noon hour and had luncheon of corn pone, fried chicken, stewed beans, and sorghum syrup. The head of the family was an old baldheaded man. He took me out to show me his peach orchard, saying that he did not believe in any of these new fangled notions about grafting or budding trees which was contrary to nature because God intended trees and other things to grow from seeds. So he had planted peach seed (stones or pits) in hills about nine feet apart and had allowed the seedlings to grow without pruning. The trees were then about six or eight years old and were like a grove of saplings along the creek, tall and slender with the lower branches ten to eighteen feet above ground. I asked him what kind of peaches they produced and how he gathered them. He said there was all kinds of peaches and when they ripened he simply shook them off.

When we returned from this visit we were somewhat concerned that Duke was not with us, but thought he might have returned by himself to our prairie, or would do so the following day.

In the spring one of the grownup Hall boys was commissioned as a constable, which gave him the right to wear openly a big Colt's sixshooter in his belt. In the summer Hall captured a man near Tigertown who was said to be a desperado and guilty of many crimes. The horse the prisoner rode was a marvelously beautiful young black stallion. Among the firearms taken from him were two derringers, that is, short pocket pistols, 41 caliber, with a chamber for a single cartridge. I traded for one of these pistols and still have it. It was badly worn from long use and had many notches filed on the barrel, and I was assured by the constable that each notch represented a man killed.

In the autumn our constable neighbor stopped at our front gate to pass the time of day with father and I. A small flock of wild geese in V formation flew high above our heads. We watched them as they approached and when nearly overhead the constable fired at the leader with his pistol. I think the constable was even more surprised than father and I to see the leader come tumbling down with a broken neck, because the distance was beyond the ordinary range of a gun or pistol. It was a remarkable chance shot.

In to p. 219 { Daisy had a little colt in the spring. I was delighted to think that I now owned two horses instead of one. Daisy and her colt grazed on the prairie with other horses and one day the herd came galloping through our lane. In the melee the colt was knocked down and trampled on, receiving a bruise on one of its hind legs that developed into a running sore that did not heal for many months. It was the cause of permanent lameness, stunted the colt's growth and gave it a lopsided appearance.

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meeting revivals, this was county election year and a picnic was held in the woods near Tigertown at which all the county and city candidates spoke, giving reasons why they should be elected and their opponents defeated, and what they would do if successful. I greatly enjoyed listening to the speeches, watching the manner, expression, and characteristics of each speaker. I was greatly impressed by their show of learning, their poised and self-possession, their eloquence, their patriotism, and their wit and repartee. I was struck by the intellectual look of their faces in contrast to the weather beaten visages of the local farmers and cattlemen. In order to attract the crowd, the candidates employed a fiddler to play popular reels and airs, and to music famished country people this was a great treat. One incident stands out in my memory. A young woman, daughter of one of our prairie neighbors, became indisposed and had to lie down. She lay flat on her back with her head resting on the root of a tree while her mother fanned her with a straw hat. Both knees were raised so that her bare legs above her stockings could be seen to the waist line. It was quite evident that she wore nothing underneath her skirts. This was my second glimpse of the female form divine.

Partnership Cotton.

> In the spring father set aside about half an acre of ground which he said sister and I could plant to cotton and keep the proceeds. We planted it and tended it with great care and had visions of making a lot of money. However, this was our fourth consecutive year of deficient rainfall in the summer and autumn, resulting in partial crop failure. My recollection is that our patch did better than any other equal area on the farm and that we picked nearly 400 pounds of seed cotton, which father bought

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Planting Cotton

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from us for \$12.00, making \$6.00 for each. With my share I bought an algebra and had enough left to buy a piece of cloth with which mother made me a suit of clothes. Father had a tailor in Paris cut the pattern and mother sewed the pieces together and fitted the garments to me after a fashion, and I was very proud of the result.

Barnums Circus.

7 In the fall Barnum's circus showed one day in Paris and father squandered three dollars on it, a dollar each for mother and him and fifty cents for each of the children. In order not to miss the parade, we got up at 3 a.m. and drove the 22 miles in the farm wagon. I remember there was a comet in the eastern sky which was an interesting spectacle and concerning which many rumors circulated among the country people. One was that the comet portended the end of the world. It was a wonderful ride across the open prairie before break of day with the comet and stars in the sky, and then to watch the deepening glow in the east followed by the appearance of the sun which looked many times its ordinary size as it rose slowly above the horizon.

We reached town in ample time to see the parade. It was wonderful and greatly excited my imagination. After the parade passed us on Main Street we walked rapidly down to the circus tent near the depot and awaited its return in order to see it a second time. A small crowd was already there for the same purpose and it rapidly grew larger. The main tent looked as large as the capitol building at Washington and there was another large tent for the menageriy, smaller tents for the sideshows, one for the horses and vans, and another for the kitchen and dining room. Outside were vans for the sale of tickets. A large elderly man

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Comet

In the fall Barnum's circus showed one day in Paris and father squandered three dollars on it, a dollar each for mother and him and fifty cents for each of the children. In order not to miss the parade, we got up at 3 a.m. and drove the 42 miles in the farm wagon. I remember there was a comet in the eastern sky which was an interesting spectacle and concerning which many rumors circulated among the country people. One was that the comet portended the end of the world. It was a wonderful ride across the open prairie before break of day with the comet and stars in the sky, and then to watch the deepening glow in the east followed by the appearance of the sun which looked many times its ordinary size as it rose slowly above the horizon. We reached town in ample time to see the parade. It was wonderful and greatly excited my imagination. After the parade passed us on Main Street we walked rapidly down to the circus tent near the depot and awaited its return in order to see it a second time. A small crowd was already there for the same purpose and it rapidly grew larger. The main tent looked as large as the capitol building at Washington and there was another large tent for the menagerie, smaller tents for the sidewalks, one for the horses and vans, and another for the kitchen and dining room. Outside were vans for the sale of tickets. A large elderly man

with white hair, a florid complexion and a benevolent look on his face, strolled out of one of the tents, stopped for a moment at a ticket van, and then approached us near the street where we expected to see the returning parade. Just then a party of several hundred young men mounted on ponies came galloping helter-skelter down the main street toward us. The old gentleman pushed forward and watched the coming cavalcade with interest and remarked to a by-stander "That's a whole show in itself." Father nudged me and said "That's old P.T. himself," at which I observed him more closely, because I had read his biography and thought him ~~one of the greatest men of the world~~ him an interesting character. However, up to that time I had regarded him simply as a showman who had achieved success in entertaining the public. Later in life I came to regard him as a great American, and something of a philosopher and an excellent psychologist.

7 Late in the fall after our own crop was gathered I rode with Ilas Hall to the Red River bottom and picked cotton for about a week. On a hot hazy afternoon I observed a big halo in the form of a double cross in the sky with the sun as a center. It was the first one I had ever seen, made quite an impression on my mind, and when I returned home I wrote a brief description of it and sent it to the St. Louis Globe Democrat which father was then taking. I felt quite important when two weeks later it appeared in the paper with an attractive headline and my name given as "special correspondent."

Barbed Wire
7 It was about this time that barbed wire came into use in Texas and the open prairies were quickly fenced up. Prior to that time the ~~only~~ ^{en} fences were made of split rails. ^{only} Without fences the prairies, which were treeless and usually lacked water, were

suitable only for grazing, the expense of fencing them with rails being prohibitive; hence the early settlers located their farms in or near the timber and streams. With cheap fencing available men with capital began to buy up the cheap prairie lands and stocking them with cattle. Good prairie land quickly rose in value from one dollar an acre to five and then to ten dollars. The price of cows for stocking purposes increased from \$12 to \$30 per head, but young stock seemed most in demand. Yearlings and two year olds, especially steers, rose from \$5 to \$20 per head. Fortunately for us, the few cows we had obtained in exchange for mother's sewing machine had given calves each year. My little cow had given four calves since the loss of her first as a two year old. Such of them as were steers I exchanged with father for heifers, so that I now had the original cow, one four year old cow, that had given two calves, one three year old cow with one calf, so that I now had 3 cows, 2 2-year olds, 2 yearlings, and 3 calves nearly a year old, or a total of eight head.

Duke.
Because of the increase in the price of cattle as compared with the price of horses, father proposed that I exchange my eight head of cattle and the ponies, Daisy and her crippled colt, for Duke, who was now a beautiful horse of four years. While I knew quite as well as father that the eight head of cattle were worth twice as much as the one horse, I coveted him because of his beauty, strength, and intelligence, and because, I reasoned, all that I possessed belonged to father until I was 21. So I readily consented. He had been running on the prairie and was not yet broken, so I immediately began to pet him, feed and water him, accustom him to the halter, and finally to bridle and

water him, accustom him to the halter, and finally to bridle and not yet broken, so I immediately began to get him, feed and readily consented. He had been running on the prairie and was all that I possessed belonged to father until I was 21. So I his beauty, strength, and intelligence, and because, I reasoned, worth twice as much as the one horse, I coveted him because of knew quite as well as father that the eight head of cattle were for Duke, who was now a beautiful horse of four years. While I head of cattle and the ponies, Daisy and her crippled colt, the price of horses, father proposed that I exchange my eight Because of the increase in the price of cattle as compared with Duke, and 3 calves nearly a year old, or a total of eight head with one calf, so that I now had 3 cows, 2 2-year olds, 1 year-old cow, that had given two calves, one three year old cow father for heifers, so that I now had the original cow, one four as a two year old. Such of them as were steers I exchanged with My little cow had given four calves since the loss of her first exchange for mother's sewing machine had given calves each year. per head. Fortunately for us the few cows we had obtained in lings and two year olds, especially steers, rose from \$5 to \$20 \$12 to \$20 per head, but young stock seemed most in demand. Year-dollars. The price of cows for stocking purposes increased from rose in value from one dollar an acre to five and then to ten lands and stocking them with cattle. Good prairie land quickly available men with capital began to buy up the cheap prairie farms in or near the timber and streams. With cheap fencing rails being prohibitive; hence the early settlers located their suitable only for grazing, the expense of fencing them with

saddle. He was a dark bay with long flowing black mane and tail, a fine head and intelligent eyes, deep chested, well rounded, very muscular, full of spirit, with only two defects, which were large feet and great nervous timidity that caused him to tremble, shy, and take fright at any unusual sight or sound. I recall that one evening Duke was standing on one side of the fence and I on the other. His flank was just opposite me and I could resist the temptation to stick my finger lightly in a tender spot. Quick as a flash he kicked, striking the fence a glancing blow which saved me from injury. Father, who had witnessed the performance, said quickly "Never touch a horse like that; he does not understand a joke." I soon began to ride Duke and enjoyed the sight and feel of his swelling and rippling muscles. He was so full of life and vigor at this stage of his development that he pranced most of the time and required close watching to keep him in control or to keep from being unseated when he shied or leaped to one side at a rustling leaf, a shadow, or the sudden appearance of a dog or other animal. Occasionally on the open prairie I gave him the rein and he would fly like the wind. He had a fast easy walk or fox trot and an easy gallop, but I could never teach him to rack or pace and hold the gait. I spent much time with him talking and petting until I gained his confidence and he knew my voice. In the years that followed he was more and more of a companion, increased in intelligence and docility, and would follow directions by voice without reins to guide him, so that he would start or stop, turn right or left, swing the corners at the ends of the rows and, in fact, do almost anything I told him to do. Also he would come at call, and whenever I approached he greeted me with a soft, comfortable whinny and a

pleased and welcoming look in his eyes.

Because of our four successive drouths and crop failures father had been unable to do more than pay the interest on the mortgage which fell due on January 1, 1884. By mutual agreement father turned the place back to Mr. Lowery, with permission to continue to occupy the house until the owner could get a tenant. Mother began teaching school in the wooden shanty on the Smith place, but I do not remember that I attended.

7

Reed's Farm.
1884.

Father immediately began to look around for another farm and sometime in January he bought one of 100 acres on the edge of Reed's Prairie, five miles northeast of Paris. He went in debt for the entire purchase price of \$800, with interest at 10 or 12 per cent. It was decided that father and I should take the team and wagon, our small equipment of farm tools, and move to the new place, mother and sister to follow in April when her school would close.

Thus the scene of my life changed again.. We took with us three horses, old George, and two of Jenny's colts, Duke and Kate: also the crippled colt that father could not sell readily, and three or four cows and heifers. All the other live stock that had accumulated father sold to get some ready money with which to buy supplies and seeds for the new place. I was approaching my fifteenth birthday and capable of doing a man's work.

We made the trip of 27 miles in a day, arriving just before sundown. From Paris out to Reed's Prairie was new territory to me. The dirt road over which we traveled was rough and led over

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low undulating hills and hollows with alternating narrow strips of prairie and woods, mostly oak. About a mile before reaching the place we crossed Stillhouse Creek that flowed only after rains between soft muddy banks. We followed the creek bottom for a quarter of a mile and then a road through the woods and came out at the rail fence between our woodland and cultivated land. Of the 100 acres half was in cultivation and the other half in cut-over woods, mostly different species of oak and some hickory, not under fence. The buildings looked old, shabby, and badly out of repair, and were surrounded by an unkempt lot covered with dried Bermuda grass and weeds. There were a few old Chinaberry trees, several large bois d'arc trees, and two or three large red oak trees which shaded a large cistern. The main house consisted of two rooms under a roof of rotting split shingles, rough oak beams shaped with an axe, and covered outside with loose, twisted, and decaying clapboards. At one end was a brick fireplace the chimney of which had settled outwards, ^{like} ~~unhitched~~ the leaning tower of Pisa, until it looked as if it might fall at any moment. Some 18 feet from the house and towards the woods was a one room kitchen in a similar state of dilapidation. The only other building on the place was a log crib and stable for the horses.

Naturally, as we drove up to the rail fence I was all curiosity to see our new home. We laid open a panel of fence, drove up alongside the house, unhitched, ^{and} with a piece of rope and a tin bucket drew enough water from the cistern for the horses, and put them up for the night in the stable.

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About that time a boy from the adjoining farm showed up. His name was Sam Lewis. He was a big, overgrown, awkward boy

of about my own age, with a freckled face. He was very curious, excessively friendly, immediately attached himself to us and was very officious in taking the lead in unloading our stuff. I took a strong dislike to him as an intruder and because of his goodnatured, overbearing officiousness and the fact that father tolerated him. Had it not been for father's evident liking for him I think I should probably have driven him off, because whatever I undertook to do, silently, capably, and in my own way, he would step up, calmly push me aside, take possession of the task, and awkwardly begin to break things or meet with mishaps. We got water and wood, built a fire in the fireplace, and cooked a supper of fried eggs and bacon and made coffee. We were tired and went to bed early, using blankets on the floor, officious Sam being one of the party.

Preparation.

7 The next day we cleaned up the house and got our things under cover and cut and hauled in a supply of wood. Then we began working like beavers. The place had not been cultivated for two years and was overgrown with weeds and sprouts. These we mashed down with a log drag, dug up or cut off the persimmon and bois d'arc sprouts, dragged the debris into windrows with a crude wooden horse rake that father and I fashioned, and set fire to them. Officious Sam worked, ate, and slept with us, much to my annoyance. He seemed to have adopted us like a stray dog, although his parents and sisters lived in a two room shack on the adjoining farm. As fast as we cleared a field of weeds and sprouts father plowed. We worked long hours and the only rest we had was nights and when it rained. Sundays we spent in repairing tools and harness, cleaning up about the buildings, making necessary repairs in the fences, and chopping and splitting wood for the following

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week. Early in March we planted corn and oats and a patch of sorghum, and in April we got in about fifteen acres of cotton. Officious Sam had to leave us before cotton planting time to help his own people. As wages for his services father gave him Daisy's crippled colt. It was the first domestic animal he had ever owned and he was very proud of the poor creature. During this period father and I took turns cooking meals, whichever happened to get up first in the morning or quit work in the field before the other.

Spring.

7 At the beginning of April father drove out to our former place on Sander's Creek and brought back mother and sister and the rest of our things.

Again the entire family worked like beavers, full of hope and enthusiasm, and much extra work was required because the fences and buildings were in need of repair and the land foul with weeds. There were ample rains and when the ground was too wet to plow the weeds grew fast. The soil was much better on this farm than on the previous one, but as with most farms was not of uniform quality. There were several acres near the woods of light gray compact soil that formed a hard crust after rains and could be worked only at just the right time; if too wet the furrow would bake as hard as cement, and if too dry great clods like boulders would be turned up. Small pockets of sandy loam between the zone of silt and the remainder of the farm could be worked at any time. The remainder of the farm was a shallow, black sticky loam with a hard red clay subsoil. There were few if any pebbles and no stones. There were patches of persimmon roots and sprouts that caused trouble in plowing, as well as small isolated patches of solid mats of Bermuda grass that would bring the

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team to a standstill when the plow ran into them. Both persimmon sprouts and Bermuda grass were almost impossible to eradicate. Every piece of persimmon root would send up one or more lusty sprouts that would grow shoulder high in a single season and become a tree in a few years. Every node or eye of the Bermuda grass roots would grow and spread in a solid mass too deep and strong to be turned with an ordinary plow and team. Then there were bois d'arc and blackberry sprouts and bushes that were even worse because of the thorns. Also the soil was full of the seed of crabgrass and cockle burs which sprouted after ever shower and grew into solid mats overnight.

Summer.

7 During the summer months father again worked in the foundry in Paris. On one corner of our farm facing the public road was a frame schoolhouse. Mother taught school in this building during July and August, lay-by time, and I attended. There were about thirty pupils enrolled, with ages ranging from 5 to 21. It was here that my sister and I got acquainted with the other boys and girls of the neighborhood. ^PReed's Prairie was about a mile wide and three or four miles long, was surrounded by blackjack and willow oak timber, with scattering specimens of hickory, ash and hackberry. It was somewhat higher than the surrounding country so that from one corner of our place near the schoolhouse we could see Paris about four miles to the south in an air line, and to the north one could see eight or ten miles over the timber to the hazy sky line. ^PAbout the only incident I remember at the school was amusing to me at the time. There was no well or cistern so that the water supply was hauled by one of the patrons to the school and kept in a barrel in one corner of the room with a tin dipper hanging to one side. During

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Every piece of perennials root would send up one or more luscious sprouts that would grow shoulder high in a single season and become a tree in a few years. Every node or eye of the Bermuda grass roots would grow and spread in a solid mass too deep and strong to be turned with an ordinary plow and team. Then there were pots of blackberry sprouts and bushes that were even worse because of the thorns. Also the soil was full of the seed of crabgrass and cockle burr which sprouted after every shower and grew into solid mats overnight.

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the long, drowsy, and insufferably hot afternoons the pupils would break the monotony of their tasks by tip-toeing to the water barrel. On one occasion I ~~saw~~^{saw} the smallest youngster, a little boy who could barely reach over the edge of the barrel, fill the dipper very deliberately and holding the dipper in his hand slowly look over the room. Just then the oldest pupil, a young man over six feet tall tiptoed up to the barrel for a drink. The contrast in height, age, and appearance of the dwarf and the giant was striking. The little fellow rolled his eyes up to his large schoolmate, saw that he was waiting, and then with the utmost deliberation slowly sipped, and sipped, and sipped. Apparently the fact that he was keeping someone waiting added greatly to his enjoyment. He did not relinquish the dipper until he had sipped every drop in it, a full quart at least, and then relinquished the dipper and his position with great reluctance.

There was the usual run of revival camp meetings this summer that afforded social entertainment for the old and young of the community.

Neighbors.

7 The adjoining farm on the east belonged to a city man and a cabin on the place was occupied by negroe tenants. Next to us was an inclosed pasture with a small herd of cattle and a flock of sheep in it. These were the first sheep that came under my observation and I formed a very poor opinion of their intelligence. In fact, sheep seem to have less sense than chickens, because a hen will usually look after her chicks and defend them if necessary, but ewes drop their lambs anywhere and abandon them without compunction. Also sheep are one of the few animals that can be frightened to death.

Next to the schoolhouse on the east was a two-room house

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Next to the schoolhouse on the east was a two-room house

occupied by a middle aged couple that were always quarreling. The head of the house was a tall, handsome, stately gentleman with clearcut features, pink complexion, white hair and mustache, and a courtly military bearing and scholarly speech. He had served as a captain in the Confederate army. His wife was a homely creature without education and complained that her husband was a quick-tempered, tyrannical skinflint. They had a grown son who was an albino, with silvery white hair and eyebrows, pink eyes, skin satiny white and pink, and he was nearly blind. The captain kept a young half-blood Percheron stallion that was small for his breed but beautifully shaped. Father brought his young mare, Kate, to this stallion and the following spring she had a black colt which we named Chester.

- 7 Our crops were fairly Autumn good. The oats were cut before they were fully mature and used as summer feed. We had two small meadows on the place that were used for grazing in the spring and then allowed to grow up and be cut for hay. Our little patch of sorghum gave us a barrel of syrup. We had enough corn to fill the crib, so that with the oats and hay we had enough feed for the horses and cows to last until spring. Our cotton gave us about five bales that sold for \$50 per bale. This was our money crop and enabled father to pay the interest and first instalment of the purchase price of the farm, so that we were greatly encouraged.

Father worked part of the time on the farm and part of the time in the foundry in town. We found living so near town a great convenience because we could drive in and back in half a day. After the cotton was picked we began cutting and hauling cordwood to town. I soon acquired skill with the ax and could

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cut a measured cord a day. Where the wood was sold in advance we could cut and deliver a cord a day, making two trips with half a cord each. On a hard level road the team could easily pull a cord, but on soft, muddy, or rough roads, and up some long steep hills, it was a struggle for them to pull through or up with half a cord. *P* I soon learned a great deal about the characteristics of different trees, their hardness, grain, texture, weight, elasticity, and so on, and how to cut a tree so that it would fall exactly where I wanted it to lie without damaging other trees, how to remove and cut up the limbs and branches, and how to split logs with iron or wooden wedges and a heavy wooden maul. *P* Cutting wood is splendid exercise when the weather is not too warm and one is not too tired, and after acquiring skill one derives much satisfaction from his ability to place the cutting edge of the axe exactly where he wishes it to fall and without varying a hair's breadth from the predetermined spot. Nothing is more ludicrous to an axman than to watch the vain efforts of a beginner and see how his blows fall ineffectively and at random so that a stump looks as if it had been chewed off by some animal like a beaver. *P* The continuous farm work during the cropping season and wood chopping and hauling in the fall and winter months when it was not actually raining throughout daylight hours and feeding and other chores before and after daylight, ^{left} ~~mean~~ little or no time for rest or recreation except Sundays and rainy days.

Magazines & Newspapers.

7 A piece of great good fortune befell ~~me~~ our little family. Father had some ⁿ ~~det~~ work done by a Dr. Barton in town and paid him for his services with cord wood. Dr. and Mrs. Barton were from the north, so there was a bond of sympathy between them

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Magnolia or Hawthorne

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and my parents. They were both well educated, gentle, cultured, and courteous. Dr. Barton subscribed for a number of the leading magazines such as Harper's, Scribner's, The Century, The Arena, the North American Review, and others. He offered to lend them to us after his family had read them. That year also father subscribed for the Chicago Tribune, the St. Louis Globe Democrat, the Louisville Courier Journal, and the Paris Daily News. We were all readers and luxuriated in this sudden acquisition of current literature.

> Study and Reading.

I religiously kept up the practice, now two years old, of daily study of lessons. Usually I took an hour for the noon meal and to allow the horses to rest. It took me only a few minutes to dispose of the meal and then I would dive into a book. In the evening, after the chores were done and supper was eaten, I would again dig into the textbooks until about 10 p.m. During the day whenever I was working alone and not subject to interruption, I would review the lessons mentally or recite them out loud, repeating such as I could remember verbatim, especially the parts I had memorized. In this way I solved problems in arithmetic, algebra, and geometry. I committed to memory the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard, Bryant's Thanatopsis, and other poems that appealed to me. These I would recite aloud in different tones of voice, but always with eyes and ears alert to see any one that approached within hearing distance. That was my regular routine on week days. ~~Sundays~~ Sundays were the great days. After the chores were done and the farm tools were repaired and put in order for the coming week, the rest of the day was mine. I would then dress in my Sunday best and with

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a bundle of the latest newspapers and one or more magazines I would walk down to a sort of island in a branch in the middle of the farm. I pretended that the islet was my castle and the branch that surrounded it was a moat. Trees and shrubs and vines and grasses grew along both sides of the branch and on the islet. Here, sitting on a bunch of grass with my back resting comfortably against a tree, in perfect solitude, I would indulge in an orgie of reading. Newspapers first, read from beginning to end, including advertisements, one after the other until they were finished. Then, picking up a magazine, I would first leaf through to see the illustrations, next run through the index and turn to the articles and stories that appealed to me most. As with the newspapers, I read the magazines through from cover to cover, and soon acquired the habit of reading rapidly, sometimes half a page at a glance if the article did not interest me, but when I had thus glanced through it I knew what was in it, the subject, line of argument, and the author's conclusions. This was real luxury, plenty to read, a few hours uninterrupted leisure, and pleasant surroundings. *P* Perhaps it is not true to say that I was not interrupted, because from time to time there were friendly visits from birds, insects, and small animals. At times I would be conscious that the air was full of bird notes, twitterings, insect voices, rustling of leaves and grass, and sunshine and shadows filtering through the trees overhead. Occasionally voices from neighboring farms could be heard, especially where a group of young people got together, and if the wind were right I could sometimes hear faintly the music of the church bells ringing in Paris. *P* For these Sunday afternoon orgies I dressed in my best. I should like to see myself as I must have looked then, a ~~rather~~

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rather cocky boy of fifteen dressed in an ill-fitting homemade brown suit that had never been pressed, a pair of narrow patent leather shoes that were almost new, and a black derby hat with a silk lining. These last had belonged to old Mr. Garner who died the previous winter. Because I was about his size his son, Asa, sent the shoes and hat to me. I was inordinately proud of them and when I put them on and stole away to my castle Sunday afternoons I felt that I was dressed like a "scholar and a gentleman."

ff This steady, daily, intense application to textbooks and the current newspapers and magazines caused me to make rapid progress, such as I probably would not have made at school where I would have been confined to a few set lessons each day that required little or no effort to learn or recite. During the winter months father allowed me to keep some of the money I earned chopping and hauling wood and with this I bought more textbooks and a cheap edition of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, which I found to be a gold mine of information. I looked up all the new words I encountered in my reading, read their definitions and those of all the words derived from the same roots with keen interest and delight.

Various ¹⁸⁸⁵ Activities.

7 We were greatly encouraged by the fair crop we had made the previous year which was supplemented with father's earnings in the foundry, mother's meager salary as teacher of the summer school, and what I earned chopping and hauling wood. In the early spring father and I made a split oak paling fence around a plot of ground for a vegetable garden that was proof against chickens and rabbits, so that in season we had fresh vegetables.

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Warren 1885. *Retrospect.*

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Father bought a lot of young apple trees at reduced rates because they had stood in the nursery too long. We set these out in the silt ground near the house and woods. Practically all of them grew, but were slow in coming into bearing. We also planted a few peach and plum trees and several rose bushes.

7 This was an active Account year for me. In addition to the regular farm work, cutting and hauling cord and stove wood, and the never ending chores, keeping up the daily routine of study, with Sunday intermissions of reading, I started a small account book in which I recorded every cent of money that came into my possession and what it was spent for. As near as I can remember my total income and outgo that year was about sixteen dollars. ^{HP} Also

7 I started to keep a record of Weather Record temperature and rainfall, because I conceived the idea that such a record kept through a series of years would enable me to ^{make comparisons with previous years and} predict what kind of weather we might expect for any month or week, assuming that the future could be predicted from the past, as I thought highly probable if one only had a daily record of the past. I bought a cheap thermometer which I hung on the shady side of the house and recorded the temperature at sunup, noon, and sundown. For a rain gauge I made a small frame, nailed it level on top of a fence post, and in it sat an empty five-gallon oil can. For a spirit level I used a small glass vial filled with water, except for a bubble of air that would rest in the middle when the vial was held in a horizontal position. After every rain I measured the depth of the water in the can with a cheap foot rule which had a scale of 16ths of an inch. I totaled the rainfall for each week and month and got a lot of fun out of watching the record grow and specu-

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lating what it would show at the end of the year and wondering how the record for the succeeding year would compare with this one.

Collecting and Collecting.

7 With the opening of spring I began collecting wild flowering plants and transferring them to a row in the garden, my thought being that by giving them special attention and care I could develop stronger plants with larger flowers or ^{more} pure or unusual colors. Some grew, but many died. While I kept up the practice of growing wild plants with attractive blossoms in this way I could not see that they were any better, if as good, when cultivated than in favorable situations in a wild state.

Also throughout this year I collected butterflies, beetles, and stinging insects. I rather specialized on insects that could sting, partly because of the many different kinds I found, but also because it was something of a sporting proposition to capture them without getting stung. I usually accomplished this by clapping my cap or straw hat over the insect, hold it close to the ground to prevent its escape, and gradually introduce a handkerchief or piece of cloth with folds so thick that the stinger could not penetrate to my fingers. These specimens I tried to preserve by sticking a pin through them and tacking them to the wall. In warm weather they smelled badly and after I had accumulated a considerable collection mother made me throw them away.

Trapping.

7 Early in the spring I set a "figure-4" trap in the bushes along the branch that ran through the middle of our cultivated land. I caught several rabbits, bluejays and Kentucky cardinals. We had the rabbits for dinner. The birds I released, except one bluejay and one cardinal. They were both fine specimens and I made a cage for each with a cup and saucer for water and feed.

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The cardinal or gross beak was an aggressive little chap and always tried to bite my finger when within reach. After keeping him awhile I released him. The bluejay was a beauty. He refused all food except kernels of corn. He would pick up a kernel in his beak and hop upon the perch, hold the kernel against the wooden perch with the claws of one foot, and with his beak break the kernel into little pieces, most of which fell on the floor of the cage. He was so busily engaged in this work of breaking kernels of corn that I had supposed he had a good appetite and was thriving. However, one morning I found him lying dead and when I picked him up found that he was simply a skeleton and a bunch of feathers, showing that he had really starved to death. I felt deep remorse and after that never molested birds.

7 "Cal.", the Ex-slave.
From time to time on rainy days I would sally forth with my gun, but rarely got anything because game was scarce. However it gave me an excuse for exploring the surrounding country. About a mile from our place was a creek with muddy banks, full of fallen trees and stumps, but dry most of the year. On the other side of the creek was a clearing and a small settlement of negro cabins and gardens. The patriarch of this settlement was Cal Givens, a white haired old darkey of antebellum days. He was always very deferential and liked to talk, and I liked to listen to him. He told of growing up on a large plantation in Georgia with his Marse George to whom he was given when the two were little more than babies. He and his white master grew up together, went through the war together as young men, and after the catastrophe his master sold the plantation and brought the family to Texas in wagons. Before starting on the journey his

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master gave Cal a belt containing the proceeds of the sale of all his Georgia property amounting to several thousand dollars and said "Cal, I trust you to guard this with your life and hand it back to me when we reach Texas; if you don't I will kill you," and Cal brought the money through safely. Other slaves were brought along by the Givens family. Our farm was the home place and the house was the first one constructed--by slave labor, of course. These slaves continued to work for the Givens family several years after the close of the war. They did not know that they were free. I asked Cal if he liked being a slave. He said he did not mind it much because he felt that he was a member of the family, but after he grew up he wanted to be free to work for himself and to marry and have a family of his own. Finally he met a white man from the north who told him that he was free and had been ever since the close of the war. He went to his master and repeated what he had heard. His master said, "Allright Cal, it is true that the slaves were declared to be free, but I thought you and the others were better off with us. It is allright for you because you can take care of yourself, but the others cannot. You can clear off a piece of land across the creek and I will deed it to you. All I ask you to do now is to finish digging the cistern." Cal said he was so anxious to be free to start clearing a place for himself that he worked all day and long after dark for several days until the cistern was finished. It was 12 feet in diameter and nearly forty feet deep. He said some of the slaves were very simple and illustrated what he meant by saying that among them was a big fisted young man who had a very good opinion of himself. One day Cal challenged him to put his fist in his mouth. He succeeded in the attempt but had dif-

difficulty in withdrawing it and his fear and contortions while trying to get his fist out caused shouts of laughter among the negroes who witnessed it.

Possums.

7 On one of my traps I found a mother possum with six or eight little ones in a hollow stump. She showed no signs of fear. Some of the little ones were clinging to her back. They were about the size of rats, covered with soft whitish gray fuzz, and were as playful as kittens. I took one of them to the house for a pet and kept it in a pine box. The next day it had disappeared. About a week later in the middle of a moonlight night I heard a slight sound that seemed to come from the roof. Looking up to the rafters I caught sight of a little gray form creeping along one of the rafters and recognized it as the little possum. I never saw it again and presume it found its way out of doors and into the woods.

7

The next three years, 1886 to 1888, were busy ones for me. Gradually we got our farm in shape, the fences repaired, the land in a good state of cultivation, the buildings repaired, and in every way we were more comfortable. We had ample rains, fairly good crops, and paid off the mortgage so that we were out of debt. It was a great day for us when the last note was paid and we felt that we actually owned the farm. To do this had meant steady, continuous, hard work and rigid economy. In addition to the regular field work in fair weather father worked in the foundry during the summer months, mother taught school several terms, and I chopped and hauled wood. I kept up my weather records and experiments with wild plants and daily intensive study and reading. We still had the current magazines that were lent to us by Dr. Barton. Book Agent. An itinerant book agent visited our house late one afternoon just before sundown. He was a young man neatly dressed and of agreeable manners. At mother's invitation he stayed to supper and his conversation proved so interesting that he was asked to stay all night, which he did. He said he was from Maryland, that he was going to college, and to help pay his expenses he sold books during the vacation season. I asked him many questions about Maryland, Chesapeake Bay, the ocean, Baltimore, and Washington. It seemed to me that he was almost a world traveller. He had with him a copy of "Peale's Popular Educator and Cyclopedia of Reference." It had chapters on penmanship, grammar, composition, pronunciation, shorthand, French, German, biography, history, geography, statistics, astronomy and other sciences, phrenology, literature, poetry, synonyms, quotations, and foreign phrases, in all 52 branches

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of learning in compact form. Because the young man liked us and mother would accept nothing for his night's lodging and meals he took mother's order for a copy of this treasury of learning, a quarto volume printed on heavy gilt edged paper and bound in full morocco, at cost, that is, without his usual commission. The price was about \$15.00. Two or three weeks later the agent came through our neighborhood a second time, ~~bringing~~ bringing the book with him and spending the night with us. To me this magnificent book was a Godsend and I read and studied it diligently and systematically until I had completed all the courses. I still have the book and occasionally leaf through it and enjoy looking at the familiar pages and illustrations that gave me so much pleasure and added not a little to my stock of knowledge in my youth.

Books.

7 In the autumn after our own cotton was picked I would mount Duke and ride away to the south of Paris, and one time to the Red River country to the north, and pick cotton, father allowing me to keep the money so earned. Most of this money was spent for books in which I reveled. In addition to textbooks I purchased sets of Emerson, Carlyle, a few of the writings of Thackeray, Dickens, Hawthorne, and some histories. I was especially fond of Emerson and Carlyle. In mathematics I worked through algebra, geometry, trigonometry, surveying, and calculus. This close application so absorbed my time and interest that I became rather unsocial and saw very little of the neighboring young people. I was happy in my books, my dreams, and all phases of outdoor life.

Seeing and Feeling.

7 I never lost interest in my environment and all that

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Reading and Learning

I never lost interest in my environment and all that

came within my range of vision/ , the everchanging colors of the sky and forms of clouds, sunlight and shadow, the infinite variety of plant, bird, and insect life, the aspects of trees, their shape, trunks, bark, arrangement of limbs and leaves, motions and sighing of the whispering leaves, blossoms and seeds, the manner in which the trees and grasses swayed in the breezes and storms, the patter and drip of raindrops in and through them, and the form, color, and movement of grasses, the flashing dew-drops on leaf and blade of grass in the early morning sun, morning glories on the fences or in the corn fields, the plowing and hoeing and the feel of fresh warm soil on bare feet, innumerable songs and sounds in the fields, the thrilling exstacy of the mocking birds, and the characteristic notes of other birds and insects; the dogs, cats, horses, cows, calves, pigs, chickens, turkeys, geese, ducks, and the cunning appealing ways of their young, and the joy of knowing how and doing all sorts of things, such as chopping wood, carpentry work with common and crude tools, repairing buildings and fences, plowing, cultivating, and watching seeds germinate and grow and develop to maturity, harvesting, eating fruits and vegetables of one's own growing, the joy of physical exercise when not tired and of resting when fatigued, of eating and drinking when hungry and thirsty--and only a growing boy working in the fields long hours under a hot sun really knows what fatigue, thirst and hunger are or the gratification that comes from satisfying intense physical wants. And with all these constant appeals to the senses of which I was conscious went the accompaniment of imagination, and a rich and continuous dream life of which the objects of sensory impressions were simply the suggestive starting points of the subjective trains of

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thought and vision.

Cyclone.

7 On returning from one of my cotton picking trips a cyclone came up in the late afternoon. The sky quickly became overcast with great masses of copper-colored clouds that boiled and twisted in and out in a terrifying manner. It grew darker and darker, but I could see that the center of the storm was a few miles to the north and that it would miss me. I watched the peculiar cloud masses with great interest and saw a great funnel form and extend downward from the sky to the earth and I could see that it was revolving like a whirlwind. It was in the direction of our home. An hour later as I rode up through the woods to our gate my heart seemed to rise in my throat as I saw that the detached kitchen was demolished and a long section of the rail fence near the house had been lifted bodily and transported a considerable distance without displacing the rails; also, for the moment, there were no signs of life about the place. I was overjoyed to find that mother and sister were safe. Mother said she heard the noise of the approaching storm, rushed out to the kitchen to close the door, and started back to the house. As she turned the corner she glanced back over her shoulder and saw the roof of the kitchen rise up into the air. The part of the house in which we lived was not more than 16 or 18 feet from the detached kitchen and yet was not damaged. The walls and roof of the kitchen were lifted straight up into the air and carried about 30 feet to one side and dropped, leaving the floor and the furniture on the floor undisturbed. To one side was a woodburning cook stove in which was a fire and on top of which were pots and kettles. These were not disturbed. Two or three chairs were

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unmoved. A pan of milk had been left on the table. It was found on the floor with contents intact. Sections of the line fence five or six panels long, made of ten foot split rails lying on top of each other and eight or ten rails high, had been transported a distance of from 30 to 60 feet without disarranging the rails. A few trees in the path of the cyclone were twisted off.

7

Temptation.
I was extremely shy of girls. In 1885, when I was sixteen, Ida Garner, daughter of Asa Garner and 14, spent a week with us visiting my sister. She was very friendly with me and followed me around a good deal, especially when I was about the house. She was the only girl other than my sister who was near enough for a sufficient length of time for me to partially overcome my diffidence. I could have fallen in love with her had it not been for my realization of the fact that I still owed five years of my life to my parents before I would be free to work for myself; also I had been raised as a puritan and believed that it would be sinful and criminal to touch, or kiss, or play with a girl until after one had married her. And, yet, although she had the attractiveness of girlhood, I could not think of marrying her because of her ignorance--and I had come to have a sort of contempt for ignorance, especially on the part of any one who had grown up in a city or town with nothing to do but to go to school. But her presence and attentions tormented me. One evening we were sitting in the dark just before bedtime. Father, mother and sister were on one side of the room talking. I was sitting alone on the other side ~~near the door~~ watching through the open door the tree tops swaying in the breeze against the sky. Ida

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came over and leaned against me and then slipped into my lap and put her arms about my neck. I was almost overcome with desire to hug her and play with her, but the days of petting parties were as yet undreamed of, and so my load of inhibitions held me perfectly still, inert, and unresponsive to her proximity, advances, and proffer of love, without taking advantage of it. According to my code at that time to have returned her caresses or to have touched her with my hands would have been equivalent to a declaration of marriage which would have bound me in honor to marry her. In living up to this code I was following up my resolution to do the best I could in any situation according to my understanding at the time in order that thereafter my conscience could nor reproach me. Later in life I have come to believe that my code was wrong, that I was laboring under a misapprehension, and while I cannot reproach myself with having failed in living up to my resolution and understanding, I keenly regret the puritanical ~~regimen~~ regime under which I was brought up to believe that any relation between the sexes, ^{however innocent,} was immoral without the sanction of a marriage license. The next day I was put to a severe test. It was raining ~~outside~~ so there could be no work done outside. I was lying on my bed with a pile of books by my side, getting my daily stint of lessons. Ida, thinly clad, came and laid by my side. Naturally I laid my book down with mixed feelings of annoyance at being interrupted and pleasure at the prospect of an experience. I turned my head to look at her and she looked straight into my eyes and then rubbed her nose against mine and kissed me several times. As she did so one of her arms stole around my neck and one of her legs was thrown over mine. My inhibitions were much alarmed, but I suspect that my resolution

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not to do anything I would later regret was bolstered by hearing my mother and sister moving about in the next room with a wide open door between us. Again I remained inert and unresponsive under the caresses of this ardent little female, although at the time I felt that I would gladly give all I possessed to be free to take her in my arms and disrobe her, or at least explore her anatomy. My torment ended a few minutes later when mother called to Ida and she left me. ~~xxxxxxlaterxx~~ After this visit I never saw her again. A year or two later we heard she was in trouble, married the father of her child after it was born, was abandoned or divorced, and went to Colorado where she was accused of keeping a disorderly house. .

code was wrong, that I was laboring under a misapprehension, and while I cannot reproach myself with having failed in living up to my resolution and understanding, I keenly regret the puritanical ~~reaction~~ regime under which I was brought up to believe that any relation between the sexes ^{however innocent} was immoral without the sanction of a marriage license. The next day I was put to a severe test. It was raining ~~xxxxxx~~ so there could be no work done outside. I was lying on my bed with a pile of books by my side, getting my daily stint of lessons. Ida, thinly clad, came and laid by my side. Naturally I laid my book down with mixed feelings of annoyance at being interrupted and pleasure at the prospect of an experience. I turned my head to look at her and she looked straight into my eyes and then rubbed her nose against mine and kissed me several times. As she did so one of her arms stole around my neck and one of her legs was thrown over mine. My inhibitions were much alarmed, but I suspect that my resolution